

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims would replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claims 1-30 (Canceled).

31. (New) A computer-implemented method for providing a distributed service marketplace, the method comprising:

receiving, from a user, requirements for services;

electronically preparing a search message including the requirements for services;

transmitting the search message to one or more service providers;

automatically receiving bids from the one or more service providers that satisfy the requirements for services;

sorting the received bids based on criteria selected by the user;

automatically selecting a best bid from the received bids based on the sorting;

automatically transmitting a contract document to the service provider associated with the best bid; and

automatically receiving the contract document from the service provider associated with the best bid, wherein the contract document includes a status of at least one of accepted, rejected, and amended.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein if the received contract document includes the status of accepted, then the contract document further includes an electronic signature of the service provider associated with the best bid.

33. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein if the received contract document includes the status of rejected, then automatically selecting a next best bid from the received bids based on the sorting and repeating the automatically transmitting and automatically receiving the contract document steps with the next best bid.

34. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising receiving, from the user, electronic payment for the services.

35. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising receiving requests for payment for the services from the service provider associated with the best bid.

36. (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising:
receiving, from the user, electronic payment for the services; and
transmitting electronic payment for the services to the service provider associated with the best bid.

37. (New) The method of claim 36, further comprising receiving a carrier receipt from the service provider associated with the best bid.

38. (New) The method of claim 36, further comprising transmitting a carrier receipt to the user.

39. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein the services comprise benefits including at least one of health care benefits, life insurance benefits, savings plans, stock option plans, pension plans, 401K plans, credit plans, flexible spending accounts, and claims processing for flexible spending accounts.

40. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

receiving, from the user, a request to change services; and
transmitting, to the service provider associated with the best bid, the request to change services.

41. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

receiving, from the user, a request to stop services; and
transmitting, to the service provider associated with the best bid, the request to stop services.

42. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein the search message comprises networking requirements including at least one of memory specifications, operating system specifications, and type of task to be executed.

43. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising providing a reimbursement to each of the service providers that provided the bids.

44. (New) A computer-readable medium that store executable instructions for providing a distributed service marketplace, the instructions causing one or more processors to:

receive, from a user, requirements for services;

prepare a search message including the requirements for services;

transmit the search message to one or more service providers;

receive bids from the one or more service providers to satisfy the requirements for services;

sort the received bids based on criteria selected by the user;

automatically select a best bid from the received bids based on the sorting;

automatically transmit a contract document to the service provider associated with the best bid; and

automatically receive the contract document from the service provider associated with the best bid, wherein the contract document includes a status of at least one of accepted, rejected, and amended.

45. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein if the received contract document includes the status of accepted, then the contract document further

includes an electronic signature of the service provider associated with the best bid.

46. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein if the received contract document includes the status of rejected, then automatically selecting a next best bid from the received bids based on the sorting and repeating the automatically transmit and automatically receive the contract document steps with the next best bid.

47. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein the instructions further cause a processor to receive, from the user, electronic payment for the services.

48. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein the instructions further cause the machine to receive requests for payment for the services from the service provider associated with the best bid.

49. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 48, wherein the instructions further cause the machine to:

receive, from the user, electronic payment for the services; and
transmit electronic payment for the services to the service provider associated with the best bid.

50. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, wherein the instructions further cause a processor to receive a carrier receipt from the service provider

associated with the best bid.

51. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, wherein the instructions further cause a processor to transmit a carrier receipt to the user.

52. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein the services comprise benefits including at least one of health care benefits, life insurance benefits, savings plans, stock option plans, pension plans, 401K plans, credit plans, flexible spending accounts, and claims processing for flexible spending accounts.

53. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein the instructions further cause a processor to:

receive, from the user, a request to change services; and
transmit, to the service provider associated with the best bid, the request to change services.

54. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein the instructions further cause a processor to:

receive, from the user, a request to stop services; and
transmit, to the service provider associated with the best bid, the request to stop services.

55. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein the search message comprises networking requirements including at least one of memory specifications, operating system specifications, and type of task to be executed.

56. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 44, further comprising providing a reimbursement to each of the service providers that provided the bids.

57. (New) A system for providing a distributed service marketplace, the system comprising:

an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to manage service information for a user; and

one or more computers to manage information for one or more service providers, at least one computer configured to:

receive, via the ERP system, requirements for services for the user;

prepare a search message including the requirements for services;

transmit the search message, via a network, to the one or more of the computers managing information for the one or more service providers;

receive, via the network, bids to satisfy the requirements for services from the one or more computers;

sort the received bids based on criteria selected by the user;

automatically select a best bid from the received bids based on the sorting;

automatically transmit a contract document to the service provider associated with the best bid; and

automatically receive the contract document from the service provider associated with the best bid, wherein the contract document includes a status of at least one of accepted, rejected, and amended.

58. (New) A system for providing a distributed service marketplace, the system comprising:

one or more computers managing information for one or more service providers; an Enterprise Resource Planner (ERP) to manage service information for a user, the ERP being configured to:

obtain requirements for services;

prepare a search message including the requirements for services;

transmit, via a network, the search message to the one or more computers;

receive, via the network, bids to satisfy the requirements from the one or more computers;

sort the received bids based on criteria selected by the user;

automatically select a best bid from the received bids based on the sorting;

automatically transmit a contract document to the service provider associated with the best bid; and

automatically receive the contract document from the service provider associated with the best bid, wherein the contract document includes a status of at least one of accepted, rejected, and amended.